

SB 5269 - DIGEST

Finds that a child's early attachment to his or her parent influences physical and intellectual development, forms the foundation for psychological development, and becomes the prototype for subsequent interpersonal relationships.

Finds that the late stages of gestation, birth, and first two years of life are critical in an infant's development of conscience, and his or her ability to trust and relate to others, and establish the foundation for key protective factors such as intelligence, trust, and empathy.

Finds that when these are depressed or when an infant is mistreated, it may lead to early aggression, impulsive temperament, and violent behavior which are the strongest developmental predictors of future involvement in violent behavior.

Finds persuasive research that strongly indicates that the best way to improve later developmental outcomes is to improve mother-child interaction and prevent early loss of primary relationships or breaks in caregiving.

Finds persuasive national statistics that demonstrate that incarcerated mothers who develop strong parenting skills and bond with their children are less likely to reoffend.

Declares that the residential parenting program at the women's correctional center protects public safety and promotes outcomes that are socially and fiscally responsible by reducing recidivism and reducing the likelihood that a child of an incarcerated mother will become at-risk for committing criminal offenses as a juvenile or adult.

Requires the department to maintain a residential parenting program at its major correctional institution for women to allow those inmates who meet eligibility requirements to keep their infants with them during their incarceration. The program shall provide an appropriate living situation for the infants, promote positive parenting skills, and facilitate transition services back into the community.